



**CITY OF BURLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

645 Pine St. Suite A
Burlington, VT 05401
802.865.7200 VOX
802.863.0466 FAX
802.863.0450 TTY

Chapin Spencer
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Lee Perry
DIVISION DIRECTOR
DPW MAINTENANCE

MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Energy and Utilities Committee

From: Chapin Spencer, Director
Lee Perry, Division Director DPW Maintenance

Date: June 22, 2021

Re: Consolidated Collection -- Staff Recommendation and Next Steps

Executive Summary:

Current collection of residential trash, recycling and compost in the City of Burlington is fragmented, inefficient and costly. A fully consolidated collection system will improve convenience, reduce environmental and community impacts, and save residents money. We suggest the Transportation Energy and Utilities Committee move to recommend the City Council approve a resolution that:

1. Advances implementation of a fully consolidated collection system for at least 1 to 4 unit residential properties in Burlington; and
2. Proposes implementation of a hybrid consolidated collection model where the City continues to collect recycling and franchised private haulers collect trash and organics; and
3. Requests City staff initiate a resident engagement process to determine the specific service levels and options that will be initially offered, and return to the City Council by March 2022 with the service level recommendations and an updated timeline.

Background:

There are many ways communities coordinate the collection of trash, recyclables and food scraps. In Burlington, the system is fragmented. For trash, individual residential property owners subscribe with a private hauler for solid waste services or they choose to bring their trash to one of the County's Drop-Off Centers (DOCs). For organics, residents choose one of three options – subscribing with a private hauler to pick up organics, bringing organics to the County's DOCs or composting in their backyards. Recycling services are consolidated through a municipally operated system that was established in the 1990's.

Problems with the current system include:

- Confusing pick-up schedules with households managing pick-ups of the various waste streams two or three different days of the week.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

This material is available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities. To request an accommodation, please call 802.863.9094 (voice) or 802.863.0450 (TTY).

- More truck traffic, emissions and road damage from multiple haulers servicing the same streets. There are currently four main trash haulers and several additional compost haulers servicing City residential properties.
- More costly service due to multiple trash and compost haulers servicing the same streets.
- Current City Recycling Program is under resourced which has put burden on existing Recycling staff and the overall Street Maintenance team.

A large majority of communities nationwide have fully consolidated collection systems. According to the City's consolidated collection consultant GBB, their survey of 461 communities nationwide indicated that this subscription arrangement occurs only in approximately 11% of communities. Consolidated collection, on the other hand, is the much more common approach with 83% of communities having the municipality either collecting waste streams itself or contracting with private haulers. Of those communities with consolidated collection, our consultant reports that approximately 58% contract with private haulers, 40% have a municipal operation and 2% have some hybrid approach.

Consolidated collection has been explored in our region for decades.

- 2000-2001: The City Council in October 2000 passed a resolution directing Public Works explore consolidated collection for trash (see Appendix). DPW reported back to the Council in 2001 and no additional action was taken.
- 2009-2015: The Chittenden Solid Waste District in 2009 launched a countywide analysis of consolidated collection that ran until 2015. That effort petered out due to strong opposition from local haulers and the heavy lift to get all Chittenden County communities behind the proposal. The report is available here: <https://cswd.net/forms-publications/>
- 2018-2021: In April of 2018, the City Council passed another resolution requesting the Department of Public Works to undertake a citywide consolidated collection feasibility study – this time with the City of South Burlington and Chittenden Solid Waste District. The report evaluated a franchised model with private haulers and the findings were presented to the Council's Transportation Energy & Utilities Committee (TEUC) in June and July 2020. At the August 2020 TEUC meeting, the Committee requested DPW staff do an in-house financial analysis of a municipally run consolidated collection system. The findings were presented to the TEUC at their March 23, 2021 meeting. The report is available here: <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CityCouncil/TEUC>

Multiple studies have identified significant consolidated collection benefits. The City's 2000 study, the CSWD evaluation in the 2010's and the recent City's study have all identified expected benefits of consolidated collection including:

- Reduced costs to residents and haulers through more efficient collection routes – the 2020 GBB study estimated a projected savings to Burlington customers of \$1.6M - \$3.6M per year for a weekly consolidated collection system
- Reduced environmental costs of excess truck traffic – the 2020 GBB study estimated a two-thirds reduction in vehicle miles traveled and emissions with a full consolidated collection system
- Reduced infrastructure impacts of excess truck traffic
- Reduced litter using wheeled carts by all residents
- Reduced noise in neighborhoods
- Better compliance with State and local mandates

Based on our review of the data, the TEUC's motion at its March 23, 2021 meeting supporting consolidated collection, and our conversations with other municipalities (see appendix), DPW

staff strongly recommends implementing a fully consolidated collection system for Burlington residents. Which consolidated collection model should be utilized is then the next question to address.

There are four major consolidated collection options for consideration:

1. **Franchise Model** – Franchised consolidated collection is where a municipality contracts with one or more private haulers to collect curbside trash, recycling, and compost. This model was studied by consultant GBB for Burlington and South Burlington in 2019 and 2020. The Vermont communities that have consolidated collection (Westford, Brattleboro, etc.) utilize this model. See the GBB study for a more detailed analysis of this model.
2. **Franchise Model with City Bid** – This model is similar to the franchised model, except the municipality retains the right to bid on districts against private haulers to collect trash, recycling and compost. After contracting with a private hauler to collect recycling during the early days of Burlington's recycling program, the City put the contract out to bid again and the City this time submitted a bid. The City bid was selected and the City has been operating the recycling program ever since. This model is not as common as the other two Options 1 and 3 but has been done more in Western states. The City of Phoenix operated this way for many years before moving to municipal operation.
3. **Municipal Operation Model** – This model is where the municipality itself, provides all aspects of trash, recycling, and compost collection, including oversight, customer service, scheduling, and billing. This operation would look similar to the City's current recycling program, but larger and more complex. See the staff memo provided to the Council's TEUC on March 23, 2021 for a more detailed analysis of this model.
4. **Hybrid Municipal / Franchise Model** – Under this scenario, the collection of different waste streams would be consolidated separately. For Burlington, this option would have recycling remain a municipally-collected service and trash and compost services would be franchised to private haulers. This model was fleshed out after discussing options with Cambridge, MA where the City collects trash, and food scraps and franchised haulers collect recycling.

More information on our consolidated collection evaluation can be found on the City's website: <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/dpw/Maintenance/CC>. Under any of the scenarios above, private haulers would still serve large residential and commercial customers in the City.

Consolidated Collection Achieves Better Economy of Scale:

In their 2019/2020 study, GBB reported haulers were charging at that time between \$28 and \$49 per month for weekly collection of two streams (trash and recycling). Based on a City review of weekly organics collection by separate organics collection companies, prices appear to be around \$15 per month. With the efficiencies gained by consolidated collection, GBB and the City project that residents could receive weekly collection of three streams (trash, recycling and organics for between \$34 and \$41 per month depending on the model and the number of residents opting out of service. GBB reported that Burlington residents could save somewhere between \$1.6M and \$3.6M by implementing a weekly consolidated collection model compared to a residents having a weekly subscription model.

Municipal and Franchising Models Similar in Cost, Depends on What is Included in Model:

Understanding the Council's and Commission's interest in comparing the franchised and municipal models, we worked with GBB and other City departments to develop financial estimates for both models under 0%, 15% and 25% opt out scenarios. "Opting out" is a term for allowing residents to decline some or all of the curbside trash, recycling and compost pick up services. As part of the proposed community engagement period, DPW would be seeking resident input on whether they'd prefer a consolidated collection system with opt outs (higher cost per household but more choice)

or without opt outs (lowest cost per household but less choice) and other options. Here is a summary of the total costs for both municipal and franchise models for weekly collection at different opt out levels.

Options	Municipal Model Flynn Ave 0% Opt Out	Municipal Model 339 Pine St 15% Opt Out	Municipal Model 339 Pine St 25% Opt Out	Franchise Model 0% Opt Out	Franchise Model 15% Opt Out	Franchise Model 25% Opt Out
Households Served Weekly	13,005	11,054	9,754	13,005	11,054	9,754
Resident Annual Cost	\$413.63	\$456.46	\$494.01	\$410.03	\$422.98	\$465.55
Resident Monthly Cost	\$34.47	\$38.04	\$41.17	\$34.17	\$35.25	\$38.80

These are estimated costs. Staff and the consultant have worked diligently to provide the best numbers we can at this time and they have been updated to reflect current tip fees. Both models include debt service for initial capital costs. The municipal model includes costs related to operating the program as an Enterprise Fund (direct and indirect contributions to City overhead, payment in lieu of taxes).

The cost differences between City projections and GBB's projections under a franchise model might be due to certain additional costs incurred by the City that a private contractor may not have to incur or may have already incurred:

- **New Facility:** The City would have to build a new facility to house staff, vehicles, and equipment for the enterprise because we do not have existing space to accommodate the operations at 645 Pine St. Private haulers may be able to accommodate this operation within their existing facilities.
- **Billing:** Unlike private haulers who already have billing systems tailored to curbside collection, the City will be incurring billing costs due to the added staff and software.
- **Labor:** The City took a conservative approach when projecting labor needs so that we are able to operate an efficient program with reasonable back-up support that minimizes the need to pull from other work groups.

Additionally, GBB's Franchise model estimate does not include additional City costs for overseeing the performance of the private haulers or replacing the overhead currently contributed by the Recycling Program's Solid Waste Generation Tax for the pro-rata share of the General Fund's administrative expenses. The City estimates that these costs, if recouped from the franchised haulers through the Solid Waste Generation Tax or other some financial mechanism, would add an estimated \$0.66 to \$4.24/month to the franchise model per residential dwelling unit depending on the assumed costs to be recouped. Factoring in these costs, the financial differential between the two models narrows.

Comparison Matrix:

To summarize the difference between the different models, and to score the various attributes, we put together the following matrix. The criterion in this comparison are not weighted and we did not try to score the 'Franchise with City Bid' model as the scoring for many categories would depend on whether a private hauler or municipal bid was selected for each district. The points were assigned as follows:

- 3 points – provides high benefit or lower risk to City and/or residents [DARK GREEN]
- 2 points – provides some benefit or moderate risk to City and/or residents [LT. GREEN]
- 1 point – provides low benefit or higher risk to City and/or residents [YELLOW]

Criterion	OPTION 1: Franchise (City runs bidding process and selects one hauler for each district)	OPTION 2: Franchise with City Bid (City runs bidding process, submits own bid, and selects one hauler for each district)	OPTION 3: Municipal Operation (City operates its own collection service for trash, recycling and organics citywide)	OPTION 4: Hybrid Operation (City operates recycling collection and franchises trash and organics collection)
Customer Choice	City-selected haulers or CSWD DOC. Some choice but less than subscription service. (2)	City-selected haulers or CSWD DOC. Some choice but less than subscription service. (2)	City service or CSWD DOC. Some choice but less than subscription service. (2)	City/haulers service or CSWD DOC. Some choice but less than subscription service. (2)
Customer Cost	Prices set through bidding process. Haulers gain efficiency through consolidation. Service projected to be cheaper than subscription service. (3)	Prices set through bidding process including the City as a bidder. Service projected to be cheaper than subscription service. (3)	City gains economy of scale through consolidation. Service projected to be cheaper than subscription service. (3)	Prices set through bidding process and City recycling budget. Service projected to be cheaper than subscription service. (3)
Customer Convenience	High. Residential customers would have one hauler efficiently picking up all waste streams on same day. (3)	High. Residential customers would have one hauler efficiently picking up all waste streams on same day. (3)	High. Residential customers would have one hauler efficiently picking up all waste streams on same day. (3)	High. Residential customers would have one hauler efficiently picking up trash and compost, while the City continues picking up recycling. Pickups can be coordinated to be on same day. (3)
Environmental Benefits	High. Consolidated collection would reduce miles traveled by an estimated two-thirds. (3)	High. Consolidated collection would reduce miles traveled by an estimated two-thirds. (3)	High. Consolidated collection would reduce miles traveled by an estimated two-thirds. (3)	High. Consolidated collection would reduce miles traveled by an estimated two-thirds. (3)
Truck Traffic / Road Impact Benefits	High. Reduction of trucks from 3 or 4 haulers to 1 hauler on many residential streets. (3)	High. Reduction of trucks from 3 or 4 haulers to 1 hauler on many residential streets. (3)	High. Reduction of trucks from 3 or 4 haulers to 1 hauler on many residential streets. (3)	High. Reduction of trucks from 3 or 4 haulers to one hauler and City on many residential streets. (3)
Ability for City to Control Service and Quality	More City control than current subscription. Contract language with private haulers would include performance criteria. Any substantive changes mid-contract would need to be negotiated. Additional City staffer needed for oversight of contractor. (1)	Depends on which option wins the bid. (not scored)	Most City control. City could choose to adjust service levels and product offerings when it deemed such changes were warranted. Offers more direct operational oversight as employees and services are managed directly by City. (3)	More City control than current subscription. City maintains direct oversight of recycling program. Contract language with private haulers would include performance criteria. Any substantive changes mid-contract would need to be negotiated. Additional City staffer needed for

				oversight of contractor. (2)
Union Labor & Pay/Benefits	No change in Union positions. City would plan to redeploy 3 current Recycling positions as Street Maintenance Workers though at additional cost to City. Franchisee contract would require livable wages and could require more. (1)	Depends whether private haulers or the City wins the bid. (not scored)	Projected increase in Unionized City positions by an estimated 9-12 staffers. (3)	Projected increase in Unionized City positions by an estimated 3 staffers. Solid Waste Generation Tax would be increased to fund these positions. Franchisee contract would require livable wages and could require more. (2)
Overall City Effort to Launch	Medium. Carefully structuring bid requirements and bid processes essential to ensuring desired level of service and performance thresholds. (2)	High. Have to develop bid process, have City develop its own bid, and if City bid successful, go through all the steps listed under municipal operation.	High. Need to stand up a new enterprise, get voter approval for Charter Change and for borrowing, construct building, hire up to 14 staffers. Significant utilization of DPW innovation capacity over the next 2-3 years. (1)	Medium. Carefully structuring bid requirements and bid processes essential to ensuring desired level of service and performance thresholds. Recycling program already exists though would require hiring of 3-4 additional staffers. (2)
Upfront Capital Costs	Low. Bid requirements would require haulers to supply trucks and any backend facilities. City could decide to provide carts - up to \$1.2M. (3)	Depends whether private haulers or the City wins the bid. (not scored)	High. City would need to construct new building, buy additional vehicles and acquire carts - up to \$6.7M. (1)	Low. City has recycling vehicles. Would only have to provide carts to recycling customers who don't yet have them. City could decide to provide carts for other streams - up to \$1.2M. (3)
Require VT Legislative approval?	No. (3)	Depends. Yes, if City wins bid and City seeks Charter Change to establish enterprise fund.	Yes for Charter Change to establish enterprise fund. (1)	No. (3)
Risk to City Government	Medium. Non-performance of private haulers. Potential legal challenges from haulers. (2)	Largely depends on which option wins the bid. Additional risk if City only won some of the districts and therefore had to set up the collection infrastructure for significantly fewer customers.	High. Additional complexity to manage \$5M/year enterprise fund. Managing costs to design, permit, construct new building. Voters could not support Charter Change or revenue bond. Potential legal challenges from haulers. (1)	Medium. Non-performance of private haulers. Potential legal challenges from haulers. (2)
Timeline to Launch	Estimated 2-3 years. (3)	Estimated 2-5 years. Depends on which bids (private haulers or City) are selected.	Estimated 3-5 years. (2)	Estimated 2-3 years. (3)

Future Flexibility	Can rebid near end of each contract term or bring in-house. (3)	Depends on which bids (private haulers or City) are selected. If haulers, can rebid near end of each contract term or bring in-house.	Once initiated, municipal operation can be tweaked, but it will be politically challenging to fundamentally revisit. (2)	Can rebid near end of each contract term or bring in-house. (3)
Impact to City Billing & Customer Service Staff	Haulers or City bills. City recommends haulers bill and provide customer service under this scenario as it is the simplest to have one entity coordinating service options and associated billing costs. (not scored)	Hauler bills if private haulers selected. City bills if City selected. (not scored)	City bills. If no opt outs, billing could be included in property taxes for every residential property with 4 or fewer units. If opt outs, DPW or other department would bill properties. (not scored)	Haulers bill. Limited City customer service impacts above what already exists with recycling. Additional role for requests, and complaints for follow up on franchised portion of model. (not scored)
Dependent on voter approval?	No. City Attorney indicates franchise operation could be established with only revisions to Ordinance. (not scored)	Potentially. City Attorney indicates if City wins the bid it would need two votes: 1) to approve a Charter Change to establish an enterprise fund and 2) to secure a revenue bond. (not scored)	Yes. City Attorney indicates it would need two votes: 1) to approve a Charter Change to establish an enterprise fund and 2) to secure a revenue bond. (not scored)	No. City Attorney indicates hybrid operation could be established with only revisions to Ordinance. (not scored)
Total	32	N/A	28	34

Overall Model Analysis:

Based on our comparison of the different models and our conversations with other municipalities, DPW staff recommends implementing Option 4 (a hybrid consolidated collection model) for the following reasons that it:

- Achieves the goals of a fully consolidated collection system with a more limited upfront resource investment (both financial and human capital).
- Builds off the structure and capacity the City has already built for the Recycling Program.
- Doesn't expand City's heavy commercial vehicle fleet and only increases staff modestly so the operation can be accommodated at 645 Pine St and avoids constructing and then maintaining another municipal facility.
- Creates additional Union positions that can support other City maintenance needs such as additional snow fighting support for the Maintenance Division.
- Funds the addition Recycling Program positions through an adjustment to the City's Solid Waste Generation Tax rate – our projections are that this would be approximately \$2.00/month increase per residential dwelling unit.
- Does not appear to require Charter Changes or voter approvals and can therefore be launched more quickly and with less risk.
- Does not require our customer service teams to establish and manage a billing system for collection services.
- Provides future flexibility to expand municipal operation of collection system should there be interest in an entirely municipally-operated model.
- Maintains a role for the private haulers while improving the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the collection system for residents.

- Gives clarity on the consolidated collection direction in the short term that may help resolve long-standing issues with Chittenden Solid Waste District regarding the Burlington Drop-Off Center at 339 Pine Street and the future of 195-201 Flynn Avenue where CSWD and the City have considered a future Drop-Off Center.

Requirement for Success:

To have the implementation of this recommendation be successful, the following items are needed:

- Public engagement on key components of consolidated collection during the coming year that will drive the development of the program including:
 - Service levels (weekly or biweekly collection for each collection stream)
 - Opt out option (ability for individual residential properties opt out of some or all of the service)
 - Eligible residential properties (initial recommendation was for 1-4 unit properties but to further expand environmental benefits in mixed use neighborhoods we would like to explore serving residential properties with a greater number of units)
 - Other service options (container sizes, back door service, seasonal service, etc.)
- Council support to utilize consulting project manager to drive program development activities during the initiation phase so staff can continue to focus on day to day operations (\$50K is budgeted in the FY'22 Recycling Program budget currently)
- Council understanding of the estimated 2-3 year development period to allow for an orderly development and transition
- Council understanding of the need to set Solid Waste Generation Tax rates sufficient to safely and efficiently operate the municipally-run Recycling Program and the oversight of the private hauler franchisees into the future.

Conceptual Timeline: We estimate needing 2 to 3 years to properly launch this hybrid consolidated system.

- 6/16/21 – DPW Commission meeting – requested recommendation
- 6/22/21 – Transportation, Energy & Utilities Committee – requested recommendation
- 7/12/21 – City Council presentation and additional requested information
- 8/9/21 – City Council vote on preferred consolidated collection model
- January 2022 – Complete public engagement on service levels, residential unit cap, opt out options, district sizes, etc. and finalize model framework
- March 2022 – Complete negotiations with CSWD for recycling and organics tip fees and Casella for trash tip fee
- June 2022 – Complete bid documents for trash and organics services and issue invitations to bid
- Fall 2022 – Select vendors
- Winter 2022/2023 - Execute contracts
- January 1, 2024 – Initiate hybrid consolidated collection service

Conclusion:

The City and region have evaluated consolidated collection for decades as it has been recognized as a standard practice nationally to deliver integrated, environmentally beneficial and cost-effective collection services to residents. The studies have indicated substantial benefits switching from the existing subscription service to consolidated collection. Due to City's declaration of a climate emergency, the City commitment to waste reduction, and cost containment for residents, we recommend the City move in the direction of creating a hybrid consolidated collection operation to collect trash, recycling, and food scraps from Burlington residents in at least 1-4 unit dwellings. The recommended motion is at the top of this memo for your consideration.

Thank you for your time. Feel free to reach out to either of us directly as we know this is a major policy decision for the City. We are happy to make ourselves available. Division Director Lee Perry can be reached at lperry@burlingtonvt.gov or 802-316-7568 and Director Chapin Spencer can be reached at cspencer@burlingtonvt.gov or 802-863-9094.

Appendices:

- Appendix A: Council 2000 Resolution
- Appendix B: Public Outreach and Feedback
- Appendix C: Consolidated Collection Interviews

APPENDIX A

City Council 2000 Resolution on Consolidated Collection

[Council Resolution on Consolidated Collection 10-16-00.pdf](#)

Resolution Relating to

TRASH COLLECTION

RESOLUTION 2000-1016, 3.03
Sponsor(s) Councilors Backus,
Spencer
Introduced: 10-16-00
Referred to: _____
Action: Adopted As Amended
Date: 10-16-00
Signed by Mayor: _____

CITY OF BURLINGTON

In the year Two Thousand

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

That WHEREAS, Burlington has trash haulers from different companies picking up on the same streets and this redundancy creates unnecessary noise, pollution, and wear and tear on the streets; and

WHEREAS, the current arrangement is uneconomical and is no longer favored by most other cities around the country; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Works, in a study about the economics and practical implications of municipalization or franchising, found that there would be benefits to the community if a new system were adopted;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby requests that the Public Works Commission and Department re-examine the benefits and costs of instituting a municipal or franchised trash collection system; and with the understanding that the level of service be maintained or improved

AMENDED

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council requests that the Public Works Commission invite local haulers and the manager of the Solid Waste District to participate in this investigation; and

10/16/00

gnf.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council requests that the Public Works Commission report its findings to the City Council by the first meeting in February, 2001.

* * * * *

DISTRIBUTION:

I hereby certify that this resolution
has been sent to the following
department(s) on December 8, 2000

DPW

ORIGINAL

RESOLUTION RELATING TO

Trash Collection

Adopted by the City Council

October 16, 2000

[Signature] Clerk

Approved....., 20.....

..... Mayor

Vol. Page

Attest:

[Signature]

Gwenn Robinson
Administrative Secretary

* * * * *

APPENDIX B

Public Engagement and Feedback

Public Engagement:

- 6/3-24/2020 - DPW distributed consolidated collection information regarding the study, and upcoming meetings via email, social media, press releases, and media advisories.
- 6/17/2020 - DPW provided the Public Works Commission with an update on the status of the consolidated collection feasibility study.
- 6/25/2020 - DPW held its first public meeting with our consultant presenting their findings on the franchised consolidated collection feasibility study. (Prior to this meeting local haulers were contacted via email informing them of the meeting, and chance for comment).
- 7/28/2020 - DPW held its second public meeting as part of the agenda for the Councils Transportation, Energy, and Utilities Committee. DPW's consultant presented their findings on the study at this meeting as well. (Prior to this meeting local haulers were contacted via email informing them of the meeting, and chance for comment).
- 8/25/2020 - DPW presented initial scope of work, outlining a municipally operated consolidated collection division, and what impacts it would have on the department as a whole. (Requested by the Committee at their July 28, 2020 meeting).
- 3/23/2021 - DPW presented its municipally operated consolidated collection conceptual budget to the Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee as requested by the Committee, at their 8/25/2020 meeting.
- 4/27/2021 - DPW presented a second version of their municipally operated consolidated collection conceptual budget to the Transportation, Energy, and Utilities Committee, outlining additional cost scenarios.
- 4/21/2021 - DPW presented both franchised, municipally operated, and municipal hybrid options of consolidated collection to the Public Works Commission.

Feedback:

- GBB conducted a phone survey in 2019 and reached 261 residents. Respondents were asked their support for a franchised consolidated collection system:
 - 39% expressed support
 - 23% expressed opposition
 - 20% said they didn't have enough information
 - 18% didn't know
- Of those who responded in writing and spoke at meetings, more residents expressed support for consolidated collection (in either a franchised or municipally operated model), over the current subscription model. Proponents cite environmental, safety, noise impacts, and confidence in a municipal option.
- Residents who oppose consolidated collection cite needing flexibility in their trash pick-up schedules, and the opportunity to choose their hauler.
- Written comments are attached.

Public Comments Consolidated Collection

Once again, the city has to find solutions to problems that don't exist. Would anybody proposing this idiot idea like to be told to only shop at Hannaford because going to other stores farther away will add to traffic and pollution? I don't think so.

The reason I choose to deal with Gauthier Trucking is for the simple reason that they offer on-call pick-up, which many of the haulers do not. I generate very little trash, and literally only call them once every three to four MONTHS when my trash container gets filled. If you think I am going to have some company come here every week to pick up almost nothing, you have another think coming.

Why don't you consolidate the insane number of construction vehicles that run rampant all over this city?

Do something constructive with your time.

Dave Parker
Burlingtonl

Dear DPW,
How might the expanded bottle bill being considered in the legislature impact your plan. The bill is here and would expand bottles/can to be collected and proposes to increase from 5 to 10 cents the deposit on the containers. <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/H.175>

[Bill Status H.175](#)

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 Committee(s): House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife 9:00 AM. H.175 - An act relating to the beverage container redemption system
legislature.vermont.gov

Thanks,
Carol Ode

Brilliant

Sent from my iPhone

Public Comments Consolidated Collection

Dear DPW,

I am writing in support of the consolidation of waste services. I have never understood why any neighborhoods need more than one trash company picking up each week on different days plus recycling plus compost. Thank you for working on this!

Clean Green, Duffys, Gauthier's, Myers, Casella all come through our neighborhood. And each only pick up a few houses on our street. It's ridiculous!

Sincerely

Christine White

NNE, Burlington

Enough with the big government involvement!!!! The City does not have to manage everything. This is a free economic market. Competition is a great thing. Let it remain that way. Between rent control and electric heat etc.. it is too much!!! Take a break from trying to control our lives.

Jim Turnbaugh

Are you making provisions for disposing of yard waste also? Thank you, Peter Bouyea BOU9@comcast.net

Dear DPW

I would like to make a couple of comments on the idea of consolidated trash pickup:

1. In general, I would welcome the idea. Currently, I see at least four different trucks coming on 2 or 3 separate days to pick up trash on my street. To consolidate that into a single weekly pass by a single truck would be great.

2. That said, I am completely opposed to making participation in a new pickup program mandatory, either outright through a required sign-up or indirectly through a tax increase. We (family of 3) have lived in Burlington for nearly 30 years and have NEVER had contracted trash pickup.

Between recycling and good household practices, we would never be able to fill even a small commercial trash container on a weekly or even bi-weekly basis. Currently, I take our trash to the CSWD drop-off center approximately monthly or at most every 3 weeks and even so I only bring a single medium barrel. I admit it was easier when the Pine St. site was in operation, but even going to South Burlington ~monthly is not a big deal.

This is not only a matter of expense (although I would certainly not favor a major increase in my costs) but also a matter of efficiency. Why should my family have to pay for trash removal capacity that we would never use? Or be encouraged to generate more trash to fill a container?

So please, if you do manage to set up a consolidated system, DO NOT require all residents to sign up or pay for it, as long as they can handle the material themselves.

Don Meals

84 Caroline St.

Burlington

Public Comments Consolidated Collection

There is nothing wrong with the current system whereby residents have an option for their trash pick up. Multiple companies providing services is healthy competition and not only assures good service (it's easy to switch to a different provider if service is lacking) but also assures competitive rates. Consolidating to one service that will probably be run by the city is just another example of socialism at its worst! Sadly, this is what Burlington is becoming - no thank you!! Let's not put our small businesses (Myers and Gauthiers) out of business or take away business from Cassella for the sake of more BIG government. What's wrong with free enterprise?

Laura Turnbaugh

Dear Sir or Ms,

I believe that consolidated curbside collection would be a big improvement over the mishmash of services we now have, with multiple trucks covering every block in the city.

I would be perfectly happy to have the DPW take over the whole operation and pay for it with property tax or (better yet) combined with my water bill, even though I am fairly sure I would be paying more - it takes me several months to fill my 45 gallon garbage can, and several weeks to fill my blue recycling box. I have a compost heap, so my most immediate need is usually chicken bones and skin that I can't put in it.

The problem is taking away business from the haulers that have that business now. We need them for other services like commercial dumpsters and the big haul-aways like those used at construction sites. I have no love for them, but in the United States, we haven't just "nationalized" businesses.

Therefore, I'm hoping we can find a way to have them continue to do the job, maybe by assigning each one an area of a size based on their current business. They wouldn't be able to get customers in other areas, but they could increase their business by providing better service or lowering prices. And come to think of it, this would benefit me, because I have been taking my dump down to Pine Street, which saves a huge amount.

Thanks,
Tom Hyde
Deforest Road

It would be spectacular if one of the results of this was less days of garbage/recycling trucks. We have them most days near our house, including one that happens before 6am.

Public Comments Consolidated Collection

I have lived with consolidated waste collection and know that it works well.

In Eugene, Oregon, our consolidated waste collection had weekly household trash pickup available in 3 sizes (determined by small, med and large trash cans).

Recycling and yard waste were collected on alternate weeks in plastic containers the size of lidded recycling containers now in use in Burlington. Not having yard waste collection in Burlington has caused many hassles and much expense for us especially when the amounts are small. Residents without pickup trucks or carts have no way of moving smaller fallen tree limbs and prunings.

We had 3 lidded containers - a small one for household trash, one large for biweekly recycling, and one large for biweekly yard waste.

Food waste was not collected separately during the time I lived in Eugene. Even so, the consolidated waste collection was so successful that methane production in the area landfill was significantly below the amount expected.

In Burlington, large trash collection trucks from three different companies arrive on our street weekly in addition to the city recycling truck. I believe that consolidated waste collection would benefit the environment, the city, and the citizens of Burlington.

Kiva Ryan

Lee,

I won't be able to attend the in-person meeting, so I wanted to submit a comment.

Consolidating collection of trash, recycling, etc. sounds like an excellent idea! I grew up in Milwaukee, WI using consolidated city collection which worked great. And it seems like a no-brainer, since it would help reduce wear and tear on the roads, help pedestrians and cyclists avoid dodging a larger number of big trucks on sometimes narrow neighborhood streets, and help substantially reduce vehicle emissions. Reducing vehicle emissions is needed for all of us with climate change, but also particularly helps those with asthma like my husband and an increasing number of children, as well as those with reduced lung capacity like my mother and other older adults.

I am all in favor of it. I hope it happens!!!

Jenny Lauer
Burlington Ward 1

Hello,

I am writing in strong support for the idea of Consolidated Collection of garbage, recycling, and compost.

I think reducing the carbon footprint of many garbage collectors on many days (not to mention reducing the noise) justifies a more organized approach.

Public Comments Consolidated Collection

Thanks for working on this,
Rebecca Schwarz

Lakeside Ave
Burlington

Hi,

I was told that you are spearheading a push for collection of garbage, recycling and compost. I am strongly in favor of this and would be interested in helping you as needed. (I just saw an article that featured South Korea's recycling and composting program— there are many models that are already working.)

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Adam Grundt
79 Lakeside Ave
Burlington, VT 05401

So here we go with another ridiculous, "progressive" concept that pretends to take into account every customer's needs and supposedly save everybody money.

I live alone. I recycle a lot. I generate very little trash. I contract with Gauthier's because they are one of the few haulers in the area who provide on-call pickups. I literally have them stop once every three months, while most of the haulers require a weekly pickup. I would then be forced to take my own trash to the landfill.

Is this scenario going to be addressed with this proposal? Knowing the whacked-out idiots on the city council now, I doubt it.

Dave Parker
19 Arlington Court

As a Burlington homeowner and longtime resident, I write to offer comment on the study draft and state that I do not support creating a municipal monopoly provider for residential waste collection. We are pleased to have a choice, do not believe this is a problem that needs solving, and do not want our options limited - at present we believe service concerns and pricing levels are addressed more promptly because of the competitive environment.

Let residents make their own choices for their own reasons without dictating outcomes or insisting on a one-size-fits-all solution.

Public Comments Consolidated Collection

-Peter Young

Hi Lee,

I think it's an extraordinary opportunity to consolidate waste/recycling/compost in a citywide contract. The reduced environmental and noise impacts will be considerate, and it will make all of our lives easier. We can still have private haulers bid for the contract, if needed. And I'd be willing to even stomach a small price increase for the above benefits. Thanks for taking this proactive step to study (and hopefully implement!!) this great idea.

Sincerely,

Ali Kenney

Scarff Ave

APPENDIX C

Division Director Lee Perry conducted interviews with consolidated collection communities. His summary of his communications follows:

- **Brattleboro VT** – The City of Brattleboro has had consolidated collection of trash, and recycling since the early 90's, and compost collection since 2013. As recently as 2016 they have gone from weekly trash to EOW trash pickup, as the addition of compost collection has reduced the amount of waste put in the trash, and weekly recycling pick up. Currently they offer EOW trash, and weekly recycling and organics pick up for their 4,443 residential dwelling units. This service is being offered by use of a private hauler contracted through the municipality to pick up 1-4 unit residential dwellings. The system is set up as a pay as you throw model, where residents buy either a 15-gallon \$2.00 EA, or 32-gallon \$3.00 EA. yellow or purple trash bag. These are the only bags that are allowed to be used. They are purchased at local area supermarkets, hardware stores, and convenient stores. Recycling is placed in a bin that can be purchased at cost through the town, or residents are allowed to use small wastebaskets as well. Compost is put in a 13 gallon container provided by the town at a cost of \$20.00, but allow residents to use a rigid container with a tight fitting lid that can be easily removed by the driver, and has to be clearly labeled compost. Funding for this \$838,000/year budget is made up of revenue through the sales of refuse bags (39%), and the remaining (61%), is paid for through property taxes, and container sales. Contributions to the program vary by household, as it is based on the assessed value of the property. Contractors are chosen through a bidding process via an RFP. The RFP has performance standards built in to guarantee that the residents and city's expectations are met. Although there are performance standards, the town still fields a majority of the concerns from residents. This accounts for an average of 1-1.5 hrs. of their time daily.
- **Westford VT** – For more that 25 years, the town of Westford has offered consolidated collection to their residents via a private hauler contracted by the town. They offer weekly trash and recycling to their 868 residence's, commercial establishments, and municipal buildings. They do not collect food scraps at this time. Residents either backyard compost, or self-haul to a facility. Trash and recycling are picked up in 64 gallon containers supplied by the contractor. Any amount over the 64 gallons, is billed directly by the hauler to the resident for an additional fee of \$1.50/32 gallons. There is no bulky item pick up. One dumpster is provided for commercial establishments, if requested, and vary in size. If they require more than once a week pick up, or more than one dumpster, the contractor will bill the establishment accordingly. The contractor provides a 30 yd dumpster free of charge for Green Up Day. They also provide a 30 yd. dumpster twice a year at the town garage on an agreed upon date for residents to dispose of bulky items. The costs associated with this program are paid for through the residents property taxes. Contracts with a private hauler are 2 year contracts that specify collection standards as described above, as well as other instances such as inclement weather provisions, as some locations are on rural roads, and travel may be limited. The cost to the 868 residents for this service is \$23.25/month, which is paid through their property taxes. In 2009 the Town of Westford Select Board formed a Committee of four Town residents, to investigate the feasibility of the Town creating its own waste hauling company to reduce the cost to the residents. The goal was to research the feasibility of the town creating its own hauling company using current and/or new hire Roads Department personnel with a purchased or leased trash hauling truck. It was hoped that the current cost to the towns residents could be reduced. In conclusion the Committee did not recommend the town create its own refuse and

recycling hauling company. Their research showed that even with the elimination of any truck purchase, the cost to the town would be above what the current contract that was negotiated with the private hauler.

- **Phoenix AZ** – The City of Phoenix Sanitation Department has been collecting solid waste for their residents since 1979. It was initially a “managed competition” system, where the City of Phoenix would bid on districts against private haulers for contracts to collect solid waste. The City’s procurement department would send out an RFP outlining services, and performance standards, and have contractors, and the City submit bids on districts. This process continued until 2013, and with the City’s new “Reimagine Phoenix” initiative, (which is to increase waste diversion rates from landfills 40% by the year 2020, and zero waste by 2050), this practice was ended. The City took over collection of trash, and recycling for the 405,000 single family living units located within the boundaries of the City, utilizing 204 fully automated side-loader trucks to service the 169 total routes. From 2009-2019 the City was able to provide services without a rate increase. Currently the fee to residents is \$32.25/month. This service includes weekly 96 gallon trash, and 96 gallon recycling collection for all residents. There is currently no food scrap services offered. There are ~8500 residents that subscribe to the curbside collection of yard debris, but that is limited as most residents have landscape companies that provide that service. Also included in this service is a quarterly curbside bulky waste pick up where each resident is allowed to dispose of ~20 cubic yards each quarter, and residents can also take up to 1,000 lbs. of material to the City owned transfer station each month. Residents receive their monthly billing via a utility bill that also has their monthly water bill. Although the bills come together, they are not combined and verified by their respective departments. In addition to collection services, the City of Phoenix also owns their own landfills, transfer stations, and material recovery facilities, which enables them to keep cost to residents affordable, by not having to pay tipping fees.
- **Nashua New Hampshire** – The City of Nashua NH, Department of Public works, have always been collecting trash, recycling, and seasonal soft yard waste, for their residents. There are approximately 23,000 residents living in 1-6 unit residential dwellings that benefit from this service. Trash is collected weekly, while recycling is every other week. They do not currently collect food scraps, as there are no local composting companies, or solid waste districts in the area that collect the material for compost. Nashua operates it’s own landfill, and the Nashua Recycling Center. Bulky waste collection is completed by appointment only. Residents call the landfill to schedule a pick-up of their large items. Trash collection is completed using 5 fully automated refuse trucks, as well as 3 semi-automated trucks to service parts of the city that automated trucks cannot. Every other week recycling is completed with 3 recycling trucks. Half of the city’s recycling is picked up one week, while the other half is picked up the following week. The cost for this service is included in residents annual property tax payments. Residents can choose to self haul, but they will still contribute to the solid waste program through their property taxes, even though they do not use the service. The \$13M Solid Waste budget, that includes the collection service, and landfill operations is paid for the City’s General Fund. I was not provided a cost break down for collection, or disposal costs incurred by the city.
- **Cambridge Massachusetts** – The City of Cambridge Ma, Department of Public works, have always been collecting trash, recycling, compost, and yard waste for their residents. The city operates on a hybrid model in which the city collects trash and food scraps, and they contract with a private hauler to collect recycling, and yard waste. The

city services ~32,000 households for trash, and food scraps, and the contractor services ~45,000 households for recycling and yard waste on a weekly basis. Other services provided to residents are electronics' pick-up, as well as mattress recycling which is also through a private contractor. The city utilizes 8 rear load semi-automated refuse trucks for trash collection, and 3 refuse trucks for food scrap collection. Recycling is accomplished utilizing 5- 25 yard rear load trucks, and 1-10 yard load truck for smaller streets. Residents are allowed to purchase 50 gallon refuse containers from stores for trash collection, but soon will need to purchase carts from the city for use with the semi-automated trucks. Food scraps are collected in 12 gallon carts supplied by the city, and recycling containers are offered in 35 and 65 gallon options. The \$15.6M budget is paid for through residents' annual property tax payment. This includes all operational costs. Contracts for recycling and yard waste collection are re-bid every 5 years to keep the costs to residents competitive. The city of Cambridge provides contractor oversight, and fields all complaints, and requests for services through their department. The contractor is paid on a monthly basis, and includes driver performance bonus incentives to do well. Residents are allowed to opt out, but would be disadvantageous as they are already paying the cost in their property tax payment. The city is exploring electrification of their refuse fleet, but does not see this happening for a couple years. When it does happen, they will replace one vehicle at a time until the whole fleet is electric. For now they are replacing 3 refuse diesel powered trucks with 3 new hybrid diesel powered refuse trucks.

- **Watertown New York** – The City of Watertown NY, has been providing curbside trash collection for their residents for ~50+ years. They currently offer weekly trash removal services. Residents can either rent a 32 gallon, 64 gallon, or 96 gallon cart for trash from the City, which is paid for on a quarterly basis, or purchase blue “City of Watertown” trash stickers at \$3.25 each. The sticker must be placed on the trash bag, and the size of the bag can be no larger than 50 gallons. For each additional bag of trash that cannot fit in the cart, or each bag placed at the curb, there has to be a blue sticker attached, or it will not be picked up. The City collects ~3000 tons of trash annually from the 3500 residential units, and City buildings. Trash collection is completed utilizing two side load semi-automated refuse trucks, and one employee per truck. The fee without cart rental charged to residents is ~\$169.00 annually at one bag per week. This fee includes recycling. The cost of the program is funded by revenue generated from cart rental fees, and trash sticker sales, totaling ~\$900K annually. The City of Watertown will not pick up residents recycling unless the resident subscribes to the trash collection services, otherwise the resident may contract with a private hauler for trash and recycling collection. The City collects recycling utilizing 1 side load recycling truck with one employee. The recycling system is not single stream, so the drivers physically sort the recycling as they load it in the truck. The city generates ~550 tons of recycling annually. Residents are billed on a quarterly basis through a utility bill, similar to a water bill. Other services provided include curbside yard waste and brush collection. Yard waste must be placed curbside, in a paper bag, and brush bundled. This will be collected the same day as trash and recycling. City will often work with department's code enforcement on clean up complaints of properties on average 40+ times a year.

- **New London Connecticut** – The City of New London CT, has been collecting trash for their residents for ~ 50 years. They collect trash, and recycling 5 days a week from 1-4 residential unit properties, for ~ 10,000 residential units. They also collect from small commercial businesses in their downtown district, twice a week, as well as area schools. Trash is collected utilizing three side load semi-automated refuse trucks, with 2 employees per truck. Residents use 96-gallon carts supplied by the City. Recycling is collected utilizing 2-side load recycling trucks, with one employee per truck. Residents use blue bins for recycling supplied by the City. The City does not currently offer food scrap pick-up. The City belongs to the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recovery Authority (SCRARRA), along with 11 other cities and towns in the region. The City has negotiated fees, and annual tonnage quantities hauled to SCRARRA's "Waste-to-Energy Facility". All of New London's trash picked up by the municipality is hauled to their 700+ ton per day, mass burn facility that combines stringent environmental safeguards to produce 18 megawatts of electrical power while safely disposing of the regions trash. The City of New London, can also tap into other resources provided by SCRARRA, such as household hazardous waste collections, electronics recycling, and brush grinding. All costs associated with collection, hauling, and disposal are paid through property taxes, and a portion is allocated through their General Fund budget. Current cost to resident figures were not provided to me at this time.